



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
BUREAU OF TENNCARE

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TENNCARE EXPANSION IN HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES APPROVED BY FEDS TENNESSEE GETS 2,300 IN-HOME CARE SLOTS

Nashville - TennCare announced today the approval of a planned expansion of home and community services. The federal government recently approved an expansion that will allow TennCare to serve 2,300 more people in its Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program for the elderly and adults with physical disabilities. With the expansion, TennCare will provide these services to 6,000 individuals this year. The funds for the expansion were approved by the General Assembly in the state budget that passed in May.

"The goal of serving more people in their homes with the kinds of services that make sound fiscal sense is becoming a reality for more Tennesseans," Bredesen said. "With this expansion there are more openings today for Tennesseans to receive this kind of care at home."

TennCare has special permission from the federal government that allows Medicaid members who qualify for nursing home care to get help at home instead as long as the cost is the same or less than a non-skilled nursing home. More than 4,300 TennCare members have received care through the HCBS program during the current program year, and there are openings for more people to enroll today. Elderly and physically disabled Tennesseans who believe they might qualify can call the HCBS hotline toll free at 1-866-836-6678.

"We all know that care at home, as long as it can be safe and effective, is the kind of care we want for ourselves and our family members," said Darin Gordon, TennCare Director. "TennCare can serve more people with the same amount of dollars because family members and other caregivers step in to provide basic care for their loved ones. The state can wrap around that care with help like personal care, homemaker services, respite and home-delivered meals."

The Long Term Care Community Choices Act of 2008 calls for an ever greater expansion of home and community based services through a program re-design that will make access to these basic in-home services faster and easier for people who qualify.

"This is one of the first stepping stones in expanding these services to more and more people," said Bredesen. "There's more work to be done that will take additional time to implement, but Tennessee is demonstrating its commitment to cost-effective in-home care for more people."

TennCare is Tennessee's managed care Medicaid program serving about 1.2 million Tennesseans, including 640,000 children.

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